

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend the Claims as follows:

Claims 1-20 (cancelled).

21. (new) An oral composition comprising:

(a) from about 0.01% by weight to about 20% by weight of an orally-acceptable, soluble potassium salt;

(b) from about 0.01% by weight to about 10% by weight of a sodium (C₈-C₂₄) alkylsulfate;

(c) from about 0.01% by weight to about 20% by weight of an orally-acceptable polar surfactant, said surfactant comprising a hydrophobic portion selected from the group consisting of a (C₆-C₃₀) alkyl group and a polymeric silicone group; and

(d) an orally-acceptable aqueous vehicle;

wherein the potassium salt is dissolved in the composition and wherein the molar ratio of the surfactant of (c) to the sodium (C₈-C₂₄) alkylsulfate is greater than or equal to about 1:1 such that when a.), b.), c.) are dissolved in d.), the resultant composition is clear..

22. (new) An oral composition according to claim 21, wherein the surfactant of (c) is selected from the group consisting of a (C₆-C₃₀) fatty acid mono or diester of ethoxylated sorbitan, a (C₆-C₃₀) fatty acid diester of polyethylene glycol, a sodium salt of a (C₆-C₃₀) fatty acyl sarcosinate, a (C₆-C₃₀) fatty acyl ester of sarcosine acid, a sodium salt of a (C₆-C₃₀) fatty acyl taurate, a sodium salt of a (C₆-C₃₀) fatty acyl methyltaurate, a (C₆-C₃₀) fatty acyl ester of taurine, a (C₆-C₃₀) fatty acyl ester of methyltaurine acid, a (C₆-C₃₀) fatty acyl betaine, and a (C₆-C₃₀) fatty acyl quaternary ammonium chloride.

23. (new) An oral composition according to claim 21, wherein the soluble potassium salt of the composition comprises a potassium pyrophosphate salt in an amount effective, optionally in combination with other pyrophosphate salts, to remove or loosen plaque and/or stains when the composition is orally applied to a dental surface.

24. (new) An oral composition according to claim 21, wherein the soluble potassium salt of the composition comprises soluble potassium salt that possesses activity in reducing dental nerve and/or dentin sensitivity in an amount effective to reduce dental nerve and/or dentin sensitivity when the composition is orally applied to a dental surface.

25. (new) An oral composition according to claim 24, wherein the soluble potassium salt that possesses activity in reducing dental nerve and/or dentin sensitivity is potassium nitrate.

26. (new) An oral composition according to claim 24, further comprising a flavoring that does not comprise a substantial amount of menthol.

27. (new) An oral composition according to claim 26 wherein the flavoring that does not comprise a substantial amount of menthol is a mint flavoring.

28. (new) An oral composition according to claim 27, wherein the mint flavoring that does not comprise a substantial amount of menthol, said mint flavoring being either a dementholated natural mint extract or a synthetic blend.

29. (new) An oral composition according to claim 21, wherein the soluble potassium salt is selected from the group consisting of a potassium pyrophosphate salt, potassium nitrate, and mixtures thereof.

30. (new) An oral composition in the form of a rinse for reducing dental nerve and/or dentin sensitivity comprising

(a) from about 0.1% to about 5% potassium nitrate;

(b) from about 0.02% to about 2% SLS;

(c) from about 0.1% to about 20% by weight of an orally-acceptable polar surfactant, said surfactant comprising a hydrophobic portion selected from the group consisting of a (C₆-C₃₀) alkyl group and a polymeric silicone group; and

(d) an orally-acceptable aqueous vehicle;

wherein the potassium salt is dissolved in the composition and wherein the molar ratio of the surfactant of (c) to the sodium (C₈-C₂₄) alkylsulfate is greater than or equal to about 1:1 such that when a.), b.), c.) are dissolved in d.), the resultant composition is clear..

31. (new) An oral composition in the form of a rinse for removing or loosening plaque and/or stains from dental surfaces comprising

(a) from about 0.1% to about 5% of a potassium salt selected from the group consisting of dipotassium pyrophosphate, tetrapotassium pyrophosphate, tripotassium pyrophosphate, monopotassium pyrophosphate, and combinations thereof;

(b) from about 0.02% to about 2% SLS;

(c) from about 0.1% to about 20% by weight of an orally-acceptable polar surfactant, said surfactant comprising a hydrophobic portion selected from the group consisting of a (C₆-C₃₀) alkyl group and a polymeric silicone group; and

(d) an orally-acceptable aqueous vehicle;

wherein the potassium salt is dissolved in the composition and wherein the molar ratio of the surfactant of (c) to the sodium (C₈-C₂₄) alkylsulfate is greater than or equal to about 1:1 such that when a.), b.), c.) are dissolved in d.), the resultant composition is clear...

32. (new) A method of loosening and or removing dental plaque and/or stains while simultaneously reducing dental nerve and/or dentin sensitivity in an oral cavity of a mammal, comprising administering to the oral cavity of said mammal an effective amount of an oral rinse composition according to claim 24.

33. (new) A method of loosening and/or removing dental plaque and/or stains while simultaneously reducing dental nerve and/or dentin sensitivity in an oral cavity of a mammal, comprising administering to the oral cavity of said mammal an effective amount of an oral rinse composition according to claim 30.

34. (new) A method of loosening and/or removing dental plaque and/or stains in an oral cavity of a mammal, comprising administering to the oral cavity of said mammal an effective amount of an oral rinse composition according to claim 21.

35. (new) A method of loosening and/or removing dental plaque and/or stains in an oral cavity of a mammal, comprising administering to the oral cavity of said mammal an effective amount of an oral rinse composition according to claim 23.

36. (new) A method of loosening and/or removing dental plaque and/or stains in an oral cavity of a mammal, comprising administering to the oral cavity of said mammal an effective amount of an oral rinse composition according to claim 31.